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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0607
INFO RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3166
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7387
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2718
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 5430

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SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/INS, PM/CBM, PM/PRO

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TAGS: KMDR KPAO PGOV OPRC NP

SUBJ: MEDIA REACTION: HUMANITARIAN ACTION

¶1. Rajdhani, a vernacular daily, in its editorial on Friday, August 7, 2009 praised the Former President Bill Clinton for his able leadership and negotiation that helped free the detained journalists in North Korea. The editorial also commended the United States for being able to distinguish the relations of the two nations with the safety of its citizens. It hailed Former President Clinton as a statesman as well.

¶2. Excerpts: "It is natural for a government to prioritize freeing its military or non-military citizens detained abroad, whether they were in line of state duty or carrying out their own responsibilities. But the success of a statesman and former president, in the capacity of an individual, in freeing his fellow citizens detained in an 'enemy' nation has become an inspiring example."

¶3. "Former President Bill Clinton has succeeded in freeing and returning American journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee, who had been held captive in DPRK since March 13. Clinton talked with Korean leader Kim Jong II. On the one hand, Clinton showed magnanimity by apologizing on their behalf and on the other hand, received applause from the American government and people."

¶4. "...Stating that it was not only a victory for the journalists' families but also a matter of national joy and delight, President Obama said the Clinton Mission was part of a 'National Mission'. However a former American representative at the UN, John Walton, has said the issue could be a disgrace to America as it was like bowing down to 'terrorism'. But this probably is a reaction representing the minority."

¶5. "The biggest message of 'Clinton Mission' was that a country cannot be considered safe if its citizens within or outside the country are not safe. A country would be respected only if its citizens are safe anywhere, in any situation. For Nepalis, who have been unable to be respected and be safe, the difference of Clinton Mission is clear. Further, this incident has made politics and politicians more respectful in America and the entire world."

¶6. "The relation between Pyongyang and America is not only complicated but is laden with enmity. By terming it Clinton's private 'humanitarian mission', the president's office had hinted that Pyongyang

could not receive any 'concession' from America. Clinton's mission had a stronger moral aspect of a statesman, rather than a country's nuclear or military powers. That's the reason the lives of Laura and Lee, just two human being like us, could be saved. That's a different and happy reason for the world to celebrate."

MOON